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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/606,438	06/25/2003	Robert M. Batz	062891.1125	6343
5073	7590	03/20/2009	EXAMINER	
BAKER BOTTS L.L.P. 2001 ROSS AVENUE SUITE 600 DALLAS, TX 75201-2980			COULTER, KENNETH R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2441	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			03/20/2009	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

ptomail1@bakerbotts.com
glenda.orrantia@bakerbotts.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/606,438	BATZ ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kenneth R. Coulter	2441	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 December 2008.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1 – 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Skene et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,249,801) (Method and System for Balancing Load Distribution on a Wide Area Network).

2.1 Regarding claim 1, Skene discloses an apparatus, comprising:

a load balancer operable to:

receive a packet included within a request that is associated with an end user (Abstract; Figs. 1, 2; col. 3, lines 26 – 41; col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48);

assign the packet to a selected one of a plurality of gateways based on an Internet Protocol (IP) address of the end user, the selected gateway configured to utilize

the IP address to provide an accounting service to the end user (Fig. 9; col. 14, lines 6 – 35 “the generated **statistics** may be **displayed to the user**”);

build an object that correlates an internet protocol (IP) address of the end user to the selected gateway, the object used to direct subsequently received packets for the end user to the selected gateway (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48);

direct the subsequently received packets based on the object and end user IP address information included in the subsequently received packets (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48);

track a user data flow according to the IP address of the object (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48); and

load balance the user data flow based on the tracking according to the IP address (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48).

2.2 Per claim 2, Skene teaches the apparatus of claim 1, wherein an **additional** load balancer may receive the packet and build an additional object that correlates the IP address associated with the end user to the selected gateway such that the additional object may be used to direct subsequently received additional packets associated with the end user to the selected gateway, the subsequently received additional packets being directed by the additional load balancer based on destination information included in the subsequently received additional packets (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48).

2.3 Regarding claim 3, Skene discloses the apparatus of claim 2, wherein the load balancers evaluate communication flows in one direction in order to direct the flows to the selected gateway based on a selected one of source and destination information (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48).

2.4 Per claim 4, Skene teaches the apparatus of claim 1, wherein the gateway is a selected one of a group of elements consisting of:

- a firewall;
- a switch;
- an intrusion detection element;
- gateway general packet radio service (GPRS) support node (GGSN);
- a client service packet gateway (CSPG);
- a packet data serving node (PDSN); and
- a Layer-two tunneling protocol network server (LNS) (col. 3, lines 44 – 55).

2.5 Regarding claim 5, Skene discloses the apparatus of claim 1, wherein the load balancer includes a table operable to store the object that correlates the IP address of the end user to the selected gateway (col. 1, lines 45 – 60; col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48; col. 14, lines 6 – 35).

2.6 Per claim 6, Skene teaches the apparatus of claim 1, wherein the gateway performs per-host operations based on an identity associated with the end user (col. 14, lines 6 – 35).

2.7 Regarding claim 7, Skene discloses the apparatus of claim 1, wherein the load balancer includes one or more algorithms that may be used in order to determine which of the plurality of gateways is to receive the packet (col. 6, line 15 – col. 7, line 48; col. 14, lines 6 – 35).

2.8 Per claims 8 – 22, the rejection of claims 1 – 7 under 35 USC 102(e) (paragraphs 2.1 – 2.7 above) applies fully.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 – 22 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kenneth R. Coulter whose telephone number is 571 272-3879. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F, 7:30 am - 4 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rupal Dharia can be reached on 571 272-3880. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Kenneth R Coulter/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2441

/KRC/